

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of authentication, comprising the steps of:
 - a) sending first information from a contents-information receiver apparatus to a contents-information sender apparatus, the first information including a combination of certificate information and second information for the contents-information receiver apparatus, the first information further including a signal of a signature for the combination of the certificate information and the second information;
 - b) in the contents-information sender apparatus, determining whether the combination of the certificate information and the second information in the first information is correct or wrong in response to the signal of the signature in the first information;
 - c) in the contents-information sender apparatus, extracting the second information from the first information and storing the extracted second information;
 - d) sending the second information for the contents-information receiver apparatus from the contents-information receiver apparatus to the contents-information sender apparatus; and
 - e) in the contents-information sender apparatus, collating the second information sent by the step d) with the second information stored by the step c).
2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the certificate

information contains information of a reliability of the contents-information receiver apparatus.

3. A contents-information sender apparatus comprising:

5 first means for receiving first information from a contents-information receiver apparatus, the first information including a combination of certificate information and second information for the contents-information receiver apparatus, the first information further including a signal of a signature for the combination of the
10 certificate information and the second information;

second means for determining whether the combination of the certificate information and the second information in the first information received by the first means is correct or wrong in response to the signal of the signature in the first information;

15 third means for extracting the second information from the first information received by the first means and storing the extracted second information;

fourth means for receiving the second information for the contents-information receiver apparatus from the contents-
20 information receiver apparatus; and

fifth means for collating the second information received by the fourth means with the second information stored by the third means.

25 4. A contents-information sender apparatus as recited in claim 3, wherein the certificate information contains information of a

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reliability of the contents-information receiver apparatus.

5. A contents-information receiver apparatus comprising:

- first means for sending first information to a contents-
5 information sender apparatus, the first information including a
combination of certificate information and second information for
the contents-information receiver apparatus, the first information
further including a signal of a signature for the combination of the
certificate information and the second information; and
10 second means for sending the second information for the
contents-information receiver apparatus to the contents-information
sender apparatus.

6. A contents-information receiver apparatus as recited in claim
15 5, wherein the certificate information contains information of a
reliability of the contents-information receiver apparatus.

7. An authentication system including a contents-information
sender apparatus and a contents-information receiver apparatus, the
20 authentication system comprising:

- first means for sending first information from the contents-
information receiver apparatus to the contents-information sender
apparatus, the first information including a combination of
certificate information and second information for the contents-
25 information receiver apparatus, the first information further
including a signal of a signature for the combination of the

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certificate information and the second information;

second means provided in the contents-information sender apparatus for determining whether the combination of the certificate information and the second information in the first
5 information sent by the first means is correct or wrong in response to the signal of the signature in the first information;

third means provided in the contents-information sender apparatus for extracting the second information from the first information sent by the first means and storing the extracted
10 second information;

fourth means for sending the second information for the contents-information receiver apparatus from the contents-information receiver apparatus to the contents-information sender apparatus; and

15 fifth means provided in the the contents-information sender apparatus for collating the second information sent by the fourth means with the second information stored by the third means.

8. An authentication system as recited in claim 7, wherein the
20 certificate information contains information of a reliability of the contents-information receiver apparatus.

9. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the certificate information contains a signal of a public key being a mate to a secret
25 key for generating the signal of the signature from the combination of the certificate information and the second information.

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5 11. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the certificate
information contains public information given only to licensees.

13. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the certificate information is given to the contents-information receiver apparatus by a management organ.

15. A contents-information sender apparatus as recited in claim 3,
wherein the certificate information contains a signal of a public key
being a mate to a secret key for generating the signal of the
signature from the combination of the certificate information and
the second information.

16. A contents-information sender apparatus as recited in claim 3, wherein the certificate information contains information related to a copyright on contents.

5 17. A contents-information sender apparatus as recited in claim 3, wherein the certificate information contains public information given only to licensees.

10 18. A contents-information sender apparatus as recited in claim 3, wherein the certificate information contains a signal of a public key peculiar to the contents-information receiver apparatus.

15 19. A contents-information sender apparatus as recited in claim 3, wherein the certificate information is given to the contents-information receiver apparatus by a management organ.

20 20. A contents-information sender apparatus as recited in claim 3, further comprising sixth means for, after the collating by the fifth means, exchanging a signal of a first key and a signal of a second key with the contents-information receiver apparatus.

25 21. A contents-information receiver apparatus as recited in claim 5, wherein the certificate information contains a signal of a public key being a mate to a secret key for generating the signal of the signature from the combination of the certificate information and the second information.

22. A contents-information receiver apparatus as recited in claim 5, wherein the certificate information contains information related to a copyright on contents.

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23. A contents-information receiver apparatus as recited in claim 5, wherein the certificate information contains public information given only to licensees.

10 24. A contents-information receiver apparatus as recited in claim 5, wherein the certificate information contains a signal of a public key peculiar to the contents-information receiver apparatus.

15 25. A contents-information receiver apparatus as recited in claim 5, wherein the certificate information is given to the contents-information receiver apparatus by a management organ.

20 26. A contents-information receiver apparatus as recited in claim 5, further comprising third means for exchanging a signal of a first key and a signal of a second key with the contents-information sender apparatus after second-information collation is done by the contents-information sender apparatus.

25 27. An authentication system as recited in claim 7, wherein the certificate information contains a signal of a public key being a mate to a secret key for generating the signal of the signature from the

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combination of the certificate information and the second information.

28. An authentication system as recited in claim 7, wherein the
5 certificate information contains information related to a copyright
on contents.

29. An authentication system as recited in claim 7, wherein the
10 certificate information contains public information given only to
licensees.

30. An authentication system as recited in claim 7, wherein the
15 certificate information contains a signal of a public key peculiar to
the contents-information receiver apparatus.

31. An authentication system as recited in claim 7, wherein the
certificate information is given to the contents-information receiver
apparatus by a management organ.

20 32. An authentication system as recited in claim 7, further
comprising sixth means for, after the collating by the fifth means,
exchanging a signal of a first key and a signal of a second key
between the contents-information sender apparatus and the
contents-information receiver apparatus.